

October 27, 1998

**INSTALLATION AND USE OF THE VISTA PRIMARY CARE  
MANAGEMENT MODULE (PCMM)**

**1. PURPOSE:** This VHA Directive mandates the installation and use of the Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VISTA) Primary Care Management Module (PCMM) for assigning patients to a Primary Care Provider (PCP) beginning November 2, 1998.

**2. BACKGROUND:** The Under Secretary for Health chartered a Steering Committee to develop a national strategy and plan for implementing Practice Profiling nationwide.

(a) Specifically, the Steering Committee was asked to:

1. Address any organization of care requirements (i.e., processes and structure) necessary to profile practice patterns, particularly provider responsibilities for outcomes and resource management;

2. Recommend any business rules (e.g., Standardized definitions of Providers percent effort assigned to Primary Care activities) necessary to accomplish Practice Profiling;

3. Recommend national standards for data, measures, and benchmarks;

4. Recommend information technology solutions, applications, and standards;

5. Recommend policy changes that address the intended purposes of Practice Profiling including the human resources and legal implications; and

6. Recommend milestones, time frames, and appropriate organizational ownership for implementation tactics.

b. The Steering Committee, composed of Network Directors, Clinical Managers, key VHA Headquarters staff, and field representatives, articulated critical elements of the implementation plan, developed fundamental assumptions underlying our efforts, and formulated attributes for a national practice profiling initiative. The Steering Committee members then co-chaired five work groups, involving more than seventy representatives from field facilities, Network offices and VHA Headquarters. These work groups developed implementation plans and policy recommendations for crucial sections of the final proposal.

c. Current Training materials on the use of PCMM include:

(1) Interactive CD ROM,

(2) Implementation Guide, and

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- (3) PCMM Technical Manual, Release Notes, and User Manual,

*NOTE: The Implementation Guide and PCMM manuals are available on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) intranet at the web address, <http://152.127.1.95/softserv/mip/wr/pro.htm>.*

**3. POLICY**

a. The PCMM VISTA package will be used to create VHA's national database of patient assignment to a PCP. The installation and use of this package must begin November 2, 1998.

b. A PCP is a single provider, supported by a team, who is assigned responsibility for managing the healthcare of discrete populations (panels) of patients.

c. For the purposes of Practice Profiling, a PCP is defined as a Staff Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant. Patients should be given the opportunity to choose their PCP.

**4. ACTION**

- (1) Each facility will install PCMM and all subsequent patches.

(2) Each facility will assign patients to a PCP as defined in this directive using the VISTA PCMM package.

c. Each facility will load the most recent scheduling patch, SD\*5.3\*142, released in June 1998. This patch will start transmitting the PCP and Primary Care Team information (if available) with the Ambulatory Care transmission to the National Patient Care Database (NPCD) at the Austin Automation Center (AAC).

d. The AAC stored the data in the NPCD starting July 1, 1998. For facilities who assigned PCP, and Primary Care Teams using PCMM before July 1<sup>st</sup>, an extraction routine will be provided to populate the NPCD with this data.

e. All patients should have a PCP designated in PCMM. The PCP can either be a VA or Non-VA Care Provider, according to patient preference. Currently, the functionality of PCMM only allows for assignment of VA Care Providers. The next release of PCMM will allow for assignment of Non-VA Care Providers. Therefore, patients with a Non-VA PCP will not have a designated PCP in PCMM until the next release.

f. If a patient assigned a PCP at one VA medical center desires a new PCP at an alternate site, the VA medical center assigning the new PCP in PCMM must notify and coordinate the transfer of primary care responsibility.

**5. REFERENCES:** VHA Directive 98-023, Guidelines for Implementation of Primary Care.

**6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** The Office of Performance and Quality (10Q) is responsible for the contents of this directive.

**7. RESCISSIONS:** This VHA Directives expires October 27, 2003.

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